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Title: RESOLUTION - Authorizing the Director of Public Utilities, or designee(s), to prepare and submit financial assistance applications to the California State Water Resources Control Board on behalf of the City of Fresno for the planning, design, and construction of the Sidestream Treatment System at the Fresno-Clovis Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility. (Citywide, District 3)

Sponsors: Department of Public Utilities

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Attachments: 1. 24-807 - Authorizing Resolution, 2. 24-807 - RWRF - Vicinity Map

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6/20/2024	1	City Council		

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

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SUBJECT

RESOLUTION - Authorizing the Director of Public Utilities, or designee(s), to prepare and submit financial assistance applications to the California State Water Resources Control Board on behalf of the City of Fresno for the planning, design, and construction of the Sidestream Treatment System at the Fresno-Clovis Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility. (Citywide, District 3)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that City Council adopt the resolution authorizing the Director of Public Utilities, or designee(s), to prepare and submit applications for financial assistance to the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) on behalf of the City of Fresno (City) for the planning, design, and construction of the Sidestream Treatment System at the Fresno-Clovis Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility (RWRF).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) made changes to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Joaquin River Basin by adding a Salt and Nitrate Management Plan (SNMP). This plan serves as the foundation for monitoring salt and nitrate levels across the Central Valley. The City has a land-based disposal permit operating under the Waste Discharge Permit (WDR) at the RWRf. To address nitrogen discharges from the RWRf and comply with the SNMP, the City is preparing to upgrade its facilities. This upgrade aims to meet the expected nitrate target through the Sidestream Treatment System at the RWRf. The City has been found eligible for financial assistance or principal forgiveness funding under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Program for the planning, design, and construction of a new deammonification system at RWRf. The application process requires the adoption of this resolution that will authorize the Director of Public Utilities, or designee(s), to prepare and submit the necessary applications, accept funds, and execute the financial assistance agreements and any amendments thereto on behalf of the City.

BACKGROUND

The City has a land-based disposal permit operating under the WDR at the RWRf. The Facility (owned, operated, and maintained by the City of Fresno) treats approximately 68 million gallons of wastewater per day generated from homes and businesses located in the Fresno-Clovis metro area (total population of 670,123 - US Census Bureau 2022). The RWRf maintains 83 percolation ponds, to which it discharges approximately 56,200 acre-feet per year (AFY) of undisinfected secondary effluent for groundwater recharge. Approximately 7,600 AFY of undisinfected secondary effluent are directly recycled for restricted agricultural irrigation. As such, the RWRf is a crucial local water resource.

As a result of the SNMP, the City is anticipating a new Waste Discharge Requirement that will limit effluent nitrate concentrations to 10 milligrams per liter (mg/l) of nitrate nitrogen (NO₃-N), with an action plan requirement of maximum effluent nitrate concentrations of 7.5 mg/l of NO₃-N. RWRf facility upgrades are needed to meet these anticipated nitrate targets.

To develop an approach for managing nitrogen discharges from the RWRf, the City completed a Nitrate Assessment and Treatment Evaluation Study (NATES) in 2020 to determine the most reasonable, feasible, and practicable option for removing nitrogen from the wastewater. The recommended upgrade is to construct new sidestream treatment facilities to remove nitrogen from the dewatering recycle flows characterized by high concentrations of ammonia. The existing treatment processes at the RWRf cannot fully denitrify the sidestream flows. By constructing a deammonification system, the sidestream flows effluent will meet the anticipated new RWQCB nitrate regulatory limits, supporting the objectives of the Nitrate Control Program.

The Department of Public Utilities (DPU) required consultant services to provide project management and engineering design services for Sidestream Treatment System Project. On May 26, 2022, the City approved a consultant services agreement with Carollo Engineers, Inc., to provide project management and engineering design services for the Sidestream Treatment System at the RWRf. Future activities include the design and construction of the following: 1) an equalization basin and deammonification reactor; 2) a process control building to house aeration blowers and electrical equipment; 3) other miscellaneous upgrades to support the integration and startup of new facilities.

The SWRCB administers the CWSRF program, which provides funding for projects associated with

water quality protection. The City is requesting funding from the SWRCB through its CWSRF program to implement construction of a new deammonification system at the RWRf. As part of the application process, and prior to any potential award, the SWRBC requires that the governing body of the applicant submit a resolution that designates an authorized representative or their designee(s) to prepare and submit applications.

This resolution solely pertains to granting permission to the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) to prepare and submit applications for financial assistance on behalf of the City. Subsequently, DPU will prepare forthcoming authorizing resolutions for the acceptance of funds and the execution of financial assistance agreements and any amendments thereto.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

Pursuant to the definition in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15378, this is not a “project” for purposes of CEQA.

LOCAL PREFERENCE

The local preference was not implemented because adoption of this resolution does not involve a bid or award of a construction or services agreement.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the General Fund or other City debt service obligations at this time. If the application for financial assistance is approved by SWRCB, fiscal impact will be evaluated and presented to City Council for approval prior to accepting the financial assistance from SWRCB.

Attachments:

- Authorizing Resolution
- Vicinity Map